

THE QUAVER,

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Choral Harmony, a collection of part-music, in penny numbers, each of which contains from 4 to 8 pages, printed either in letter-note or in the ordinary notation. Lists of contents on application.

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London: F. Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row. Edinburgh: Johnstone, Hunter & Co.

Harmony as it ought to be understood.*

BY JAMES M'HARDE.

(Continued from page 144.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE word fundamental, as applied in harmony, has been so misunderstood that few can thoroughly appreciate the true importance of Fundamental Bass. Even great composers indulge in incorrect writing from their habitual dependence upon the artistic instinct rather than upon acoustical knowledge.*

In the study of harmony the attention of the student is generally concentrated for the most part upon *Thorough Bass*, and consequently the actual Bass of chords, which is not of greater importance than the Tenor, Alto, or Soprano, is always under immediate notice, whilst the Root, or Fundamental Bass is only thought of as a matter of secondary importance.

If the student will invert this process of thinking, and have a constant care for the Roots and Fundamental Bass his intellectual enjoyment of harmony will be enhanced, and his chance of becoming a composer will be proportionately greater.

Any ordinary school-boy can learn *Thorough Bass*, but it takes the imagination of genius to grapple with the intricacies of composition, and, independent of all rules, and merely mechanical contrivances, bring before the mind their immediate explanation in the phenomena upon which they are based.

Having derived our Tonic Harmony from a single fundamental sound, we must now try to derive the sounds of our scale from the Harmony in its turn.

Most theorists are obliged to make assumptions without giving sufficient reason,

because they derive their natural scale from figures only. A Mr. Brown has recently propounded the very evident fact that, by extending the harmonies of a given sound, we come upon all the intervals of the scale; but what advantage do we derive from this in our study of harmony? Or rather is there not a more practical way of looking at the subject? I think there is. In the first place our scale is not the true natural scale, so far at least as melodic progression is concerned, for the very simple reason that it cannot be found in nature except when the influence of harmony has been felt.

The natural scale so far as I have been able to judge, has no leading note, and might at present lack other intervals, but for the gradually increasing influence of harmony. Here is an old Irish melody, which obscurity has guarded from tamperers who, have, in these times, destroyed the beauty of national Scotch and Irish airs by their impertinent corrections.



Some would be ready to say this was in the mode of the fifth of our scale. Nothing could be more absurd. The Tonic of the melody is distinctly C, notwithstanding the quaintness arising from the want of the fourth, the peculiar tuning of B flat, and the omission of the seventh in ascending.

We need not speculate further upon these peculiarities than to observe that the seventh (B flat) is not as B flat to C but as the seventh partial to C, in the series extended beyond those already represented by squares.

I may here also draw attention to the fact that the flat seventh may be introduced even in our modern music without changing the key, but on the contrary rather reinforcing our feeling for repose upon the Tonic.

* An example of this may be found in the Sonata Pathétique, first page, B natural being written instead of C flat.

Examples of this may be found in Bach and Handel. In short we might write a piece in which all sevenths descending might be flattened, provided all were sharpened in ascending, without producing any unsatisfactory result. Apart from these considerations we are bound to consider our system of harmony as a development of art; this granted, we must derive our scale from our harmony and not from partials alone.

We are familiar with the practical effects of the fundamental chord, but there may be principles involved of which we have not dreamed.

(To be continued.)

Richard Wagner.

THIS great man has been called over to the majority, dying in Venice, where he had gone for rest and health, on February 13th at about 4 p.m. So much has been said and written about WAGNER that it is hardly necessary now, even if it were a seemly course, to discuss at length his life work. It cannot be said that the principles he has forcibly and eloquently enunciated have so far produced such a healthy glow of conviction as will, according to present vision, produce a great school; for though his mannerisms have been to a small extent imitated, he has no successors. His death, it may be, will stand out as an extinguishing darkness warning us of the approaching close of the great musical cycle, just as other arts have closed their brilliant periods of productive power, to be followed by a wide-spread and intelligent mediocrity. His neglect, amounting almost to contempt, of the canons of the art, will now tell more against his fame as a genius of much power than it has yet done even in the heat of much prejudiced controversy; for the man of genius must live in the future to no small extent by his power of eloquence through the universally received impressions of order and mental prescience, through which the spirit of beauty is transmitted from one generation to another. The reputation of the man who feels called upon to violate the principles of the language he speaks, usually suffers when his personal influence and the power of his immediate followers are no longer present to ensure the seeming justification of such departures from the use of established idioms. In the end no man is strong enough to stand by his own eloquence,

and the power of a great departed genius depends to no small extent upon the strength of solid, good workmanship, and the most precious thoughts are inevitably those which have been most carefully built up. Certainly the future fame of RICHARD WAGNER will have to undergo a sharper test in this direction than has yet fallen upon the work of any other kindred genius. His career offers a splendid and most instructive exemplification of the rich and varied powers possessed, but not always so widely cultivated by men of exceptional intellectual power. WAGNER was a philosopher in his own peculiar way, seeing in the arts a united sisterhood, whose different mediums of expression through the distinct organs of sight and hearing, were to be concentrated upon the setting up of one complete poetical realisation. Though in the burning pursuit of his great conception of the universally and unbroken sympathy of the sister arts, he often neglected to strengthen himself with the requisite technical power, his memory will ever live as that of the first great expositor of the cosmopolitan character of art in its own domains. The large, wide mind of the distinguished poet, composer, literate, and artist in the widest sense of the word, scanned the vast horizon of the art-world with a power of vision exceeding its actual powers of flight; WAGNER, indeed, dreamt of and pointed to greater glories than he even realised. Is there now vitality and originality enough in the world of music to advance upon this wide art-pathway combined with such judgment as will avoid the technical weaknesses and vain ebullition of eccentricity as so often marred the work of the aspiring author of the "Nibelungen Ring"? Naturally so large, reflective, and widely artistic a mind as that of WAGNER was one of slow development, and his works illustrate this growth with clearness. It might furnish matter for curious speculation, to trace out the general consensus of public opinion upon the different operas representing the several periods of his mental development.

WAGNER was born in Leipzig on May 22nd, 1813. From an early age his musical, poetic, and dramatic instincts displayed themselves. He commenced his career practically as the conductor of a small operatic troupe at Magdeburg, and in 1839 he was similarly engaged with another company at Riga. Late in the same year he proceeded to Paris with introductions from MEYER-BEER, but Paris was not a rightly chosen home for WAGNER. His genius and courage sustained him now through years of misery and disappointment; whilst he continued to develop his varied mental powers. His real life of prominence began with the success of "Rienzi" in Dresden in 1842,

"Der Fliegende Holländer," showing a notable advance in the composer's method, was produced in Dresden in 1843, only to be heard in England in 1870; "Tannhäuser" also came out at Dresden; "Lohengrin" at Weimer, in 1850; "Tristan und Isolde" at Munich, in 1865; "Der Meistersinger von Nürnberg" also at Munich in 1868; "Der Ring des Nibelungen" at different dates for its different divisions during 1869 and 1870, the entire work being given at Bayreuth for the first time in 1876; and "Parsifal" at Bayreuth in 1882. In addition to these great operas, he wrote several choral and orchestral works, and a few piano-forte pieces, including one sonata and several songs. His literary labours included a large number of essays bearing upon art-topics. He is destined, however, to be judged and remembered by his remarkable operas, in which he illustrated so unique a union of large and varied powers, and in which, if he did not prove himself the founder of a school, he at least led the way to an operatic reformation, displayed a genius of a high order, and has shewn himself to be the greatest master of orchestration the world has yet known.—*Musical Standard*.

Applause.

IT has probably been given to no one to attend an opera or a concert when the applause of the audience has been judiciously tendered to the artists, and an assemblage discerning enough and sufficiently appreciated to show satisfaction unanimously when praise is due, or their discontent when blame is called for, is rarely to be met with anywhere. Well-meaning, but ignorant auditors often applaud when the slightest lull takes place in a concerted piece, and generally contrive to demonstrate their unbounded satisfaction for a cavatina or a duett by frantic clapping as soon as any natural rest of two bars takes place. The cavatina or duett, however, proceeds to its musical termination, for every piece of music is constructed upon mathematical principles; a melody must have a part number one and a part number two, and the well-meaning are hissed or remain dumb-founded: but the smiles of the non-applauding environment do not prevent them from repeating their silly practice some other time.

A paid *claque* is bad enough, we all know, and in reality does more harm to the singers and the music they interpret than is generally supposed, but the foolish approbation manifested by cane-

raping and hand-clapping is infinitely worse, and is frequently as annoying as the presence of the unbearable vulgarians who chatter incessantly during the performance.

Another type of applause is he who will boisterously cry out "bravo" when a *prima-donna* has terminated her aria with a charming *roulade* or a wonderful trill, and, unless taught by some friend to say "brava" for a lady and "bravo" for a gentleman, he will egregiously err to his dying day. But even the persons who have been coached in this particular and who will applaud well enough when a tenor or a soprano are upon the stage, will still continue to make themselves ridiculously obnoxious by shrieking forth *bravo* or *brava* as they have been taught when several artists come before the footlights. But where stupidity is most strongly shown is in the interruption of the last notes of a singer. For example a difficult morceau is sung; toward the last the executant relies on the effect of a methodically developed and striking last note, and employs every available resource to make that note pure and telling. The untutored portion of the audience feels that the high or low note is coming, and just when it is *attacked* begin the insane and vociferous applause, drowning the natural *crescendo* and *diminuendo* of the note, instead of waiting until the end, as they should. Many singers take advantage of this when they know the kind of audience they have to deal with, and they risk notes which otherwise they would not have cared to attempt. We cannot blame them, considering the lack of artistic tact and common sense on the public's part. In concerted pieces in opera, in the crash of a finale, some open their mouths but emit no sound, or at least do not strain their voices. What is the use? The volume, sweetness, strength, or expression, as it may be, will be utterly lost in a storm of applause. Why waste such powers?

Every audience is different at an opera, and this ridiculous system cannot be quelled until the Utopian days reach us, when a law will be made to prevent it, or when a courteous solicitation will be tendered to the public requesting no applause to be given to the artist and performer until the very last note of their *soli* has been emitted.—*New York Musical Critic and Trade Review*.

The Quaver Composition Classes.

A new Postal Class, for beginners, will commence the study of Harmony and Musical Composition in July. All communications respecting the class to be addressed

The Secretary of The Quaver Composition Classes,

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The Emancipation of Women from the Pianoforte.

IN times past women played on lutes, viols, and all kinds of instruments of the violin and guitar family. In Italian and Flemish pictures up to the end of the seventeenth century, a "music party" meant something very like what would be called a quartett party at the present day. No one had any suspicion as to the violin's being an ungraceful instrument in the hands and arms of a lady; and Domenichino has represented St. Cecilia herself performing a solo not on the violin, but on the far more formidable violin-cello. After the introduction of the harpsichord, however, and, above all, after the replacement of the harpsichord by the more perfect pianoforte, stringed instruments were generally abandoned by the fair sex. The pianoforte now came to be regarded not merely as the only instrument for a lady to cultivate, but also as one which every lady was bound to learn. The prejudice on the subject of pianoforte playing as an indispensable "accomplishment" must have caused a considerable amount of annoyance and pain to multitudes of dull girls and to a certain number of bright ones. It has never been expected of every lady that she shall be an able pianiste, any more than it is expected of every gentleman that he shall be a finished scholar. It has always been enough for a man to be in a position to say that he had learned Greek and Latin when he was at school; and a woman satisfied all the claims of society when she set forth that she had studied the piano, but owing to domestic occupations of another kind, or for no matter what reason, had been unable to "keep it up."

Of the rather vague principles put forward under the name of "woman's rights" there is not one which generous-minded men would more willingly concede than the right of young women, or even of little girls, to refuse instruction in the art of playing the piano. There are houses in which the practising of scales is quite an ordinary punishment for juvenile offenders. Such a sentence is one that involves pain and suffering not to those alone on whom it is pronounced; and that in itself is a sufficient reason for abolishing it from the family book of punishments. Little girls fear the piano, and long for the time when, having mastered its difficulties, they will not be called upon to play it any more; while numberless great girls regard it as one of the many nuisances which they must put up with until

they get married. Once, however, liberate young women from that piano to which like serfs they have so long been "assigned" (but not "attached"), and some of them will take to cultivating it for its own sake; while the remainder will at least spare both themselves and their friends a considerable amount of annoyance.

The enormous difficulty of modern pianoforte music constitutes in itself a reason why in the education of young girls the piano should not, like "dancing and deportment," be made obligatory. A woman can get through life so well without playing the piano; and for a few shillings, or even in extreme cases for a single shilling, she can, if her lot happens to be cast in London, hear from time to time the finest players that this great pianoforte-playing age has ever produced. It is not that the piano is unworthy of her attention that woman should be liberated from the task-work imposed upon her in connection with it. It is because music, like every other art, demands from its votaries special gifts and inclinations, and because among women who are thus endowed it is a mistake to suppose that the piano is the only instrument suitable to them. Let it be understood in the first place that it is no more a disgrace for a young lady not to play the piano than it is a disgrace for her not to paint, to draw, or to model; and, in the second place, that if she does mean to play some instrument it is a mistake for her to restrict herself as a matter of course to the piano. Next to the organ, the piano is, thanks to the orchestral effects which it can be made to produce, the finest instrument in the world; and it is the only instrument for which every great composer writes as a matter of course, and for which every great composer's orchestral works are arranged in reduced form. To praise at the expense of the piano the violin, which—except when *tours de force* are indulged in—yields like the human voice but a single note, is a common thing, but it is one that we should not ourselves care to undertake. The violin—effective in a truly musical sense—must, like the human voice, be accompanied either by the orchestra or the pianoforte, or by other members of the violin family. The pianoforte is (putting aside, of course, the too colossal organ) the only instrument which, for harmonic as well as melodic purposes, is complete in itself, and which is really an orchestra in little.

There are good reasons, then, why all who care much for music should study the piano, but no reason why they should study the piano exclusively. Often in the same family there are two, three, and even four pianists. How much and

how advantageously the musical domain of such a family would be increased if, with or without neglect of the piano, the instruments of the violin family were taken up, with a view, not necessarily to string quartets, but, at least to the numerous pieces written by great composers for violin or violincello, and piano. "The violin—I always include the viola and violincello—is no doubt (says Mr. Hullah in his excellent little work on "Music in the House") a difficult instrument; but the difficulty of acquiring a serviceable amount of skill on it has been much exaggerated. To become a Joachim, a Holmes, or a Piatti, is the work of a lifetime, even for men gifted with equal aptitude and perseverance to these—turned to account under skilful guidance and at the right time of life, and supplemented and encouraged by a thousand circumstances as impossible to take account of as to bring about and foresee. But there is an amount of skill below—very much below—that of artists of this class which, if accompanied by feeling, taste, and intelligence, may contribute largely to the variety and agreeableness of music in the house." It may be hoped that in a few years, without the number of our domestic pianists being too much diminished, that our domestic violinists will be considerably increased. Some half-dozen lady pianists have appeared this season in London, at public concerts, who possess the very highest merit; and at a half private, half public concert given recently at Stafford House for the benefit of a charity the chief attraction was a string band consisting of no fewer than twenty-four lady executants. The diversion, then, of feminine talent from the piano toward the violin is not a movement which has to be originated; it needs only to be encouraged.—*St. James' Gazette.*

Old English Church Music.

FORMERLY in country churches the loft was, and even is, usually known as the "singing gallery," the musical instruments being the clarionet, violin, violincello, flute, etc. Mr. Noake, in his rambles in Worcestershire, says that in Tenby Church, in the year 1771, there were not only horns and clarionets, but also a drum whose sound was heard in divine service for some forty years after that date. In some country churches the number of the psalm that was to be sung was chalked upon a slate, and suspended from the front of the singing-

gallery. It is said of the parish clerk of Isie Brewers, Somersetshire, that in giving out the hymn, and suddenly finding that the slate was not hung up, his announcement took the following shape:—"Let us sing to the praise and glory—I say, why doan't 'ee hang out the slate?" During the singing the congregation in the nave turned their backs upon the clergyman, and looked towards the singing gallery, where the parish clerk and his fellow performers were ensconced. In a Yorkshire village church early in this century the instruments in the singing gallery were the violin, violincello, clarionet, serpent, and bassoon; and when the clergyman wished for the "Old Hundred" to be sung, he called out to his clerk:—"Straack up a bit, Jock! straack up a bit!" Of this same Yorkshire pair it is related that on the occasion of the first missionary meeting, when the congregation were waiting in the church-yard, the old vicar said to his clerk, "Jock, ye maunt let 'em into the church; the deppitation a'n't coom!" but on the arrival of the two clergymen who formed the deputation, the clerk called out to the people, "Ye maunt gang hoame, t'deppitation's coom!" The old vicar introduced the two clergymen in addresses that were models of brevity:—"T'first deppitation will speak!" "T'second deppitation will speak!" After which the clerk lighted some candles in the singing gallery, and gave out an appropriate hymn, "Vital spark of heavenly flame!" The parish clerks who gave out the hymns and led the congregational singing are probably at the present day only to be found in a few remote places and in parishes where there is a second church, at some miles distant from the mother church, with its one Sunday service. Here, very likely, the man is still to be found who unites in his own person both clerk and choir. A friend of mine had such a clerk, and the hymns were those of Tate and Brady. First of all, the clerk sounded the note on a pitch-pipe, and after this musical prelude he wound up his nose, as it were, and with a strong nasal snarl pitched the key-note, and began the psalm. A great favourite with him was what he called "The Happy Man," the psalm beginning with the line, "Happy the man whose tender care (which word he pronounced "car"); and the last line of the verse, "The Loard shall give him rest," was repeated twice and shouted with great fervour. The rustic audience were charmed with the execution of this psalm, and are greatly pleased when a Boanerges out of their own ranks can thus display the power of his lungs.—*All the Year Round.*

MONTHLY NOTES.

THE Academical Board of Trinity College, London, has awarded the gold medal annually offered for an essay on a musical subject to Miss Melloney Stephens, of St. Leonard's-on-Sea, for her essay on "The Value to the Musician of a Knowledge of Modern Languages"; and the prize of two guineas to Miss H. L. Elmes, of Addlestone, for her essay on "Early Writers for the Pianoforte."

St. Cecilia Magazine has a stirring paragraph. "The question of instrumental music in the Church is no longer to be confined to the organ, Dr. Gordon, of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Glasgow, lecturing on the subject a few weeks ago, ventured to say that 'if the Psalms of David were meant to be sung at all in the Church now, they were meant to be sung or chanted as they were of old—that was, with instrumental accompaniment, with the cornet, the flute, the psaltery, and the harp, and last, though not least, the melodious fiddle.' After all, it does seem strange that the theatre should enjoy a monopoly of the orchestra while the Church must go a-begging for a harmonium or an organ." We must look out lest Scotland will gain upon us after all in the matter of church music.—*Musical Standard*.

Mr. John Owen (Owain Alaw), a musical composer, who was well-known throughout both North and South Wales, died on January 30th., at Chester, in his sixty-third year. For many years he has taken an active part in the furtherance of Welsh musical education, and has been chosen as adjudicator at nearly all the Eisteddfodau held in the Principality. He was also a favourite conductor at other choral gatherings. His musical compositions were received with great favour in Wales.

With the sanction and approval of Sir Frederick A. Gore Ouseley, Bart., and of Professor G. A. Macfarren, Mr. Ridley Prentice is preparing a work which aims at imparting to pianoforte students a knowledge of musical form. It is entitled, "The Musician, a Guide for Pianoforte Students: Helps Towards the Better Understanding and Enjoyment of Beautiful Music."

FLOROW is no more! The famous German died on the 24th of March at the good old age of seventy-three. He was three years old when the battle of Waterloo was fought, and subsequently essayed politics; but his passion for music prompted him to relinquish

a state appointment that he had obtained, and to devote himself entirely to that art. He went to Paris and became a pupil of the composer Reicha; but his earlier works were all rejected by the Parisian managers. He had, however, the good fortune ultimately to receive a commission to furnish music for "Le Naufrage de la Médusa." The success of this work gave him an honourable place among the composers of the day. He then produced several works, some of which are not much known, and in 1858 his popular work, "Martha," the five-hundredth performance of which has just been celebrated in Vienna. In this opera occurs the well-known song, the "Last Rose of Summer." A short time before his death he became blind.

Handel's "Samson" was well performed on January 31st. at Canterbury by the local Philharmonic Society, under the excellent direction of Dr. Longhurst. The chief singers were the Misses Ellen Horne and Winthrop, Messrs. A. Kenningham, and R. Rhodes.

The Crystal Palace Company have decided to manage the details of the approaching Handel Festival themselves. Many of the leading artists will be the same as before, no doubt, including M. Sainton as leading first violin, and Sir Michael Costa as conductor. The band will consist of 245 players, and the chorus will be composed of both town and country singers.

The public trial of a new mechanical fire-engine on the Thames Embankment on February 7th. was a matter of interest to owners and managers of concert-rooms, musical instrument manufacturers, etc. A feature in the invention is the use of chemicalised water charged with carbonic acid gas, a sure antidote to fire. The utility and economy of the invention are undeniable.

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